

DOH YOUTH PREVENTION PAID MEDIA CAMPAIGN

The 2005-06 DOH Youth Prevention anti-tobacco advertising campaign kicked-off statewide on October 3rd. It features the social consequences of smoking – a real departure from previous strategies aimed at the physical dangers of tobacco use.

Research Groups:

- Exploratory research from focus groups and on-the-street interviews were conducted in Seattle, Tacoma and Spokane.
- From these we learned:
 - Youth are now extremely educated on the health consequences of tobacco use.
 - They are aware of the reasons NOT to smoke.
 - Some smoke anyway – to ease stress is #1 reason given.
 - They also justify it by saying it is the least of their problems (drugs, alcohol, grades, parents, relationships, etc.).
 - Some admit to liking to do “dangerous” activities.

Common Denominator:

- The importance of boyfriend/girlfriend relationships.
- They think about this 24/7!
- How to be more attractive? What do the others think of ME? My life is ruined!!!

Campaign:

- Aimed at 12-14 year olds, with spillover to 9-11 and 15-18.
- Middle school transition is when youth are very susceptible to outside influences.
- All kids are very worried about fitting in, having friends, being accepted, and not being talked about badly or made fun of by their peers.
- The resulting new campaign has no live actors in the TV spots.
- Instead a stop motion animation process called Animatics is used.

Message:

- Boy and girl “dolls” are used to represent junior high kids.
- They’re just about to kiss, when one pulls back and instead does something “gross”, such as biting into a cat fur ball, or biting into a dead possum.
- When they come back to complete the kiss, the other partner backs off and walks away in disgust.
- The tag line says: ***Kissing a Smoker is Just as Gross!***

New Micro Web Site:

- The campaign includes the debut of a new youth micro Web site, ***Ashtraymouth.com***.
- Scored big with the focus groups.
- Features the Gross Gallery; a maze game; information on tobacco use and consequences; an on-line game they can play with friends; and a link to ***UnfilteredTV.com***.

Wrap-up:

- The campaign tested very favorably with 12-14 year old kids.
- If adults don’t “get it” or “like it” – that’s OK. It’s not for them.
- The youths felt the dolls and Web site would be the talk of the schools, and there would be good potential for peer-to-peer dialogue about the campaign and the anti-tobacco message.
- Message is expected to be effective with youth smokers and non-smokers.